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Annual Report

OF

HEALTH AND SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE

WALSALL RURAL DISTRICT

FOR THE

Year ending December 31st, 1925

BY

V. E. MILNE

M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

WALSALL:
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1926



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To the Walsall Rural District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of submitting my first Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary conditions of the Walsall Rural District for the year ending December 31st, 1925.

Owing to Dr. Fox's much-regretted death, my task in compiling this, my first Report, has been more difficult than it might have been had my predecessor been able to hand matters over to me.

In December, 1925, a circular was issued by the Ministry of Health intimating that the Annual Report for 1925 should be a Survey Report, embracing :—

1. The measure of progress made in the area during the preceding 5 years.
2. The extent and character of changes made in the Public Health Services during that period.
3. Any action of importance in the organisation or development of Public Health Services contemplated by the Local Authority.

Unfortunately, I am not in a position to discuss these matters to any great extent, as I have not yet acquired a thorough working knowledge of the District and of its requirements and improvements.

The population of the District as estimated by the Registrar General at June 30th, 1925, is 13,800.

Population.

There were 249 Births registered in the District, 130 being males and 119 females ; 2 males and 3 females were illegitimate. The birth rate was 18.04 per thousand of the population. Last year the birth rate was 20.13. The birth rate for the whole of England and Wales was 18.3.

Births.

The birth rate for this year shows a further decline.

Under the Notification of Births Act, there were received 223 notifications, giving a shortage of 26 cases, which were not notified.

Deaths.

The number of Deaths registered in the District during 1925 was 150.

36 deaths were transferred into the District, and 16 deaths were transferred out of the District.

Of these 150 deaths, 83 were males and 67 females.

The Death Rate from all causes and at all ages was 10.87. Last year the rate was 9.08, and the death rate for the whole of England and Wales was 12.2 for 1925.

Infantile
Death Rate.

There were 20 deaths of children under one year of age, 9 of which were males and 11 females, as compared with 13 last year. The infantile mortality as measured by the proportion of the number of deaths registered at ages under one year to 1,000 births, was 80.03. Last year this number was 50.54.

The Infantile Mortality was therefore considerably higher than the previous year. This is accounted for by the fact that no less than 8 of these 20 deaths occurred amongst premature and congenitally weak infants, and 4 deaths resulted from Diarrhœa.

Zymotic
Death Rate.

18 deaths were due to Zymotic Diseases (*i.e.*, Small Pox, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Diarrhœa and Fever), viz. :—6 from Measles, 1 from Whooping Cough, 4 from Diarrhœa, and 7 from Diphtheria. This gives a Zymotic death rate of 1.3. Last year there were only 7 deaths from Zymotic Diseases, and the death rate was .508.

Measles.

It will be noted that there were 6 deaths from Measles, whilst last year no death occurred from this disease.

42 cases of Diphtheria were notified, 7 of which proved fatal. The districts in which the cases occurred are as follows :—Pelsall 31, Aldridge 8, Rushall 2, Great Barr 1. 5 cases were removed to Cheslyn Hay Hospital, and 2 cases to Walsall C.B. Isolation Hospital.

Diphtheria.

36 cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the year, but no case proved fatal. 17 cases occurred in Pelsall, 15 in Rushall, and 4 in Bentley.

Scarlet
Fever.

One case from Rushall was removed to Cheslyn Hay Isolation Hospital.

Four cases of Erysipelas were notified, all from Rushall.

Erysipelas.

19 cases of Primary and Influenzal Pneumonia were notified during the year, viz. :—Rushall 12, Aldridge 5, Bentley 1, Pelsall 1.

Pneumonia.

There was no case of Puerperal Fever notified.

Puerperal
Fever.

One case of Typhoid Fever was notified from Aldridge, but fortunately it did not prove fatal. The father of the patient had been in the Forces in India, and had been in contact there with Typhoid Fever cases, so probably infection had passed from him to his son.

Typhoid
Fever.

One case of Lethargic Encephalitis was reported from Rushall—a male aged 38.

Encephalitis
Lethargica.

Under Form A of the Tuberculosis Order of 1912, 20 cases were notified, 13 of which were Pulmonary Tuberculosis, 4 of Tubercular Glands, and 3 of Tubercular Bones and Joints.

Tuberculosis

5 cases were in Rushall, 9 in Pelsall, 3 in Aldridge, 1 in Bentley, and 2 in Great Barr.

3 cases were notified under Form C and 5 under Form D.

During the year 3 deaths were due to Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and 2 to other Tubercular Disease.

23 Swabbings from throats were sent for examination at the Bacteriological Laboratory, 20 of which proved negative. 4 specimens of sputa were examined for Tubercle Bacilli and all proved negative.

Scavenging.

There is still ample room for improvement in the Scavenging of the District, in spite of the fact that many deep defective ashpits have been substituted by dust-bins.

Especially is this the case in Aldridge, Pelsall and Rushall, where the scavenging is carried out by contract.

It is rather significant that in Pelsall, where sanitary conditions are worse than in any other part of the District, the notifications of Infectious Diseases are far more numerous than they should be, taking into consideration the populations of the various areas in the District.

A glance at the figures will show that as regards Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, and Tuberculosis notifications, Pelsall easily tops the list.

Diphtheria	(42 notifications)	–	31	from Pelsall.
Scarlet Fever	(36 ")	–	17 " "	
Tuberculosis	(20 ")	–	9 " "	

The conversion of the Sewage Disposal to the Water Carriage system is, I think, the first step to alter this state of affairs.

Isolation.

I understand that the late Dr. Fox, my predecessor, laid emphasis on the fact that an Isolation Hospital is very much needed. Several cases have arisen where urgent isolation was essential, and when we have been unable to obtain this isolation either in Cheslyn Hay Hospital or in the Walsall County Borough Isolation Hospital. This state of affairs should not exist if widespread epidemics are to be prevented, and I strongly advise that proper isolation should be guaranteed for these urgent infectious cases which are certain to appear in the future.

I have heard recently that the Brownhills Council are to have an isolation hospital erected, and I suggest that if at all possible, the Walsall Rural District should endeavour to join them in their venture.

The Health Visiting is still being carried out in a satisfactory manner.

Health
Visiting.

Miss Webster, the Visitor for Pelsall, Rushall and Bentley, has been transferred to the Seisdon district, and her place has been filled by Miss Trueman.

It was not necessary to have any schools closed on account of epidemic or infectious disease.

School
Closure.

As regards the Housing problem, it is gratifying to know that the majority of the Council Houses (over 80 in all) commenced to be built in 1925, have now been completed and tenanted.

Housing.

Much, however, remains to be attended to regarding the housing of the working classes, even although the number of houses erected privately was considerably increased during 1925.

During the year 54 houses have been built, but they have been all of the villa and bungalow type.

In Aldridge 12 have been built, Rushall 3, Pelsall 5, and Great Barr 34.

The working of the Town Planning Act has been continued on the same lines as previous years, of which the following is a resumé :—

(1) Houses Inspected in the District :

Rushall	...	213	Aldridge	...	196
Pelsall	...	181	Great Barr	...	97
Bentley	...	35			
		Total	...	722	

(2) Houses fit for human habitation in their present conditions :

Rushall	...	174	Aldridge	...	122
Pelsall	...	130	Great Barr	...	68
Bentley	...	25			
		Total	...	519	

(3) Houses having defects for which notices were served :					
Rushall	...	39	Pelsall	...	51
Aldridge	...	74	Great Barr	...	29
Bentley	...	10			
		Total	...	203	

(4) Houses made reasonably fit for human habitation, the repairs including roofs, floors, better ventilation and sanitary conveniences :					
Rushall	...	32	Pelsall	...	39
Aldridge	...	50	Great Barr	...	22
Bentley	...	8			
		Total	...	151	

Housing
and Town
Planning
Act.

Two Notices were served under Section 17 of the Housing and Town Planning Act during the year.

Both were wooden buildings—1 in Great Barr and 1 in Bentley.

The work-places, including Bakehouses and Dress-makers' Shops, have been regularly visited during the year.

Meat Order
of 1925.

Since the Meat Order of 1925 came into force, the Sanitary Inspector received notices for the slaughter of the following animals :—

Calves	...	9	Lambs	...	11
Beasts	...	134	Sheep	...	325
Pigs	...	317			
		Total	...	796	

Only one small pig was unfit for human consumption, and only one contravention of the Act occurred.

Under the Tuberculosis Order of 1925, 4 cows were ordered to be slaughtered by a Veterinary Surgeon, 3 being certified fit for human food, and one was condemned.

Water
Closets.

During the last five years 293 Privies have been converted into Water Closets.

In 1921	...	...	...	42 conversions.
" 1922	...	...	...	30 "
" 1923	...	...	...	30 "
" 1924	...	...	...	106 "
" 1925	...	...	...	85 "

Ashpits.

During the same period 275 ashpits were done away with and bins substituted in their stead, and 64 Privy Pans replaced the same number of Privies.

The Scavenging in Aldridge, Pelsall and Rushall, at present carried out by contracts, leaves plenty of room for improvement.

The general substitution of Ashpits by Bins would undoubtedly bring about a vast improvement, and as seen above, this substitution is taking place fairly rapidly.

The Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Jackson, has done his best during the year to fulfil his various duties.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

V. E. MILNE,

Medical Officer of Health.

MAY 28th, 1926.

STAFF.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH—

V. E. MILNE, M.B., CH.B. (D.P.H.).
Part Time Officer.

INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES—

GEO. JACKSON.
Whole Time Officer.

Contributions are made to the Salaries of the above out of Exchequer Grants.

DEATHS REGISTERED DURING THE CALENDAR YEAR 1925.

CAUSES OF DEATH				Males.	Females.
ALL CAUSES	...	...	...	83	67
Measles	...	...	...	3	3
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	1	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	3	4
Influenza	...	...	...	2	—
Respiratory Tuberculosis	...	...	...	—	3
Other Tuberculosis Diseases	...	...	...	1	1
Cancer, Malignant Disease	...	...	...	9	8
Rheumatic Fever	...	...	...	1	—
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	...	...	...	10	3
Heart Disease	...	...	...	9	5
Arterio-sclerosis	...	...	...	—	1
Bronchitis	...	...	...	7	—
Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	7	5
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	2	1
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	...	—	1
Diarrhœa, etc. (under 2 years)	...	...	...	1	3
Appendicitis and Typhlitis	...	...	...	1	—
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	...	...	...	—	1
Congenital Debility and Malforma- tion, Premature Birth	...	...	...	3	5
Suicide	...	...	...	1	1
Other Deaths from Violence	...	...	...	5	2
Other Defined Diseases	...	...	...	17	20
Deaths of Infants under 1 year—				—	—
Total	...	...	...	9	11
Illegitimate	...	...	...	—	—
TOTAL BIRTHS—				—	—
Legitimate	...	...	...	128	116
Illegitimate	...	...	...	2	3
				—	—
				130	119
POPULATION—					
(For Births and Deaths)	...	...	...	13,800	

TABULAR SUMMARY of the WORK of the SANITARY DEPARTMENT during the year, and action taken under the Public Health Acts or Bye-Laws, &c.

	No. of Abatement Notices.				Nuisances abated after Notice by	
	Inspec- tions and observa- tions made.	Defects.	Inform- al by In- spector.	Formal by Auth- ority.	Inspector.	Author- ity.
Dwelling Houses and Schools	5	4	4	—	4	—
Foul Conditions ...	4	4	4	—	4	—
Structural Defects ...	722	203	30	59	21	130
Overcrowding ...	13	13	13	—	5	—
Unfit for Habitation ...	4	2	2	2	—	2
Lodging Houses ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Milk Shops and Dairies ...	29	—	—	—	—	—
Cowsheds ...	61	11	—	—	11	—
Bakehouses ...	15	3	3	—	3	—
Slaughter-houses ...	30	5	5	—	5	—
Canal Boats ...	16	—	—	—	—	—
Ashpits and Privies ...	229	161	17	10	54	23
Deposits of Refuse and Manure ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Water Closets ...	151	45	17	3	21	5
House Drainage ...	7	10	4	—	4	—
Defective Traps ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
No Disconnections ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other faults ...	5	5	5	—	5	—
Water Supply ...	2	—	—	—	—	—
Pigsties ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Smoke Nuisances ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	1,293	466	104	74	137	160

Food and Drugs Acts—

No. of Samples of Water taken for Analysis	...	...	0
No. of Samples of Water condemned	...	...	0

Precautions against Infectious Disease—

No. of Houses Disinfected after Infectious Disease	...	71
--	-----	----

Sanitary Administration—

No. of Privy Closets converted to the Water Carriage System during the year	...	...	...	85
Total No. of W.C.'s at end of the year	...	...	...	1,582
Total No. of Privy Closets remaining at the end of year	...	...	...	1,077

HOUSING.

Number of new Houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total	...	...	...	...	...	54
(b) As part of a Municipal Housing Scheme	...	...	...	...	...	None

1. UNFIT DWELLING HOUSES.

Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	...	...	...	...	...	722
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910 ...	...	...	...	...	...	579
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	...	...	...	...	...	2
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	203

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	151
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS.

A.—Proceedings under Section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1919.						
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ...	...	...	...	...	...	None

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health on the administration of the Act in the Sanitary District of Walsall (Rural) during the Year 1925.

1.—INSPECTION.—Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.				
Premises.	Number of			Prosecutions.
	Inspections.	Written Notices.		
Workplaces (other than Outworkers' Premises)	33	Nil.		Nil.
2.—DEFECTS FOUND.				
Particulars.	Number of Defects.			Remedied.
	Found.			
Defective Water Vessels	Nil.	Nil.
Want of Cleanliness	7	7
Defective Sanitary Accommodation	Nil.	Nil.
4.—REGISTERED WORKSHOPS.				
Total Number of Workshops on Register	26

GEO. JACKSON, Inspector.

TABLE X.—**Birth-rate, Death-rate, and Analysis of Mortality** during the year 1925.

(Provisional figures. The rates for England and Wales have been calculated on a population estimated to the middle of 1925, while those for the towns have been calculated on populations estimated to the middle of 1924. The mortality rates refer to the whole population as regards England and Wales, but only to civilians as regards London and the groups of towns).

	BIRTH-RATE PER 1,000 TOTAL POPULA- TION.	ANNUAL DEATH-RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION.								RATE PER 1,000 BIRTHS.		PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL DEATHS.			
		All Causes.	Enteric Fever.	Small-pox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping Cough.	Diphtheria.	Influenza.	Violence.	Diarrhoea and Enteritis (under Two years.)	Total Deaths under one year.	Causes of Death certified by Registered Medical Practitioners.	Inquest Cases.	Uncertified Causes of Death.
England and Wales ...	18.3	12.2	0.01	0.00	0.13	0.03	0.15	0.07	0.32	0.47	8.4	75	92.1	6.9	1.0
105 County Boroughs and Great Towns, including London ...	18.8	12.2	0.01	0.00	0.17	0.03	0.18	0.09	0.30	0.43	10.8	79	92.1	7.3	0.6
157 Smaller Towns (1921 Adjusted Populations 20,000-50,000). ...	18.3	11.2	0.01	0.00	0.15	0.02	0.14	0.06	0.31	0.38	7.6	74	93.0	5.9	1.1
London ...	18.0	11.7	0.01	0.00	0.08	0.02	0.19	0.11	0.23	0.46	10.6	67	91.1	8.9	0.0

MATERNITY AND

PARTICULARS RELATING TO THE WORK DURING

HEALTH VISITORS : E. A. BANTON AND MISS TRUEMAN.

	BIRTHS															
	Notified.										Transfers from other Districts during the Month.					
	Full Term.		Premature		Stillborn.		By Midwives.		By Parents and Doctors.		Under ten days.		Over ten days and under one year.		One year and under five.	
	L.	I.	L.	I.	L.	I.	L.	I.	L.	I.	L.	I.	L.	I.	L.	I.
Jan.	20	...	...	...	...	...	8	...	12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Feb.	13	...	...	...	...	...	10	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Mar.	16	...	...	...	...	...	13	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
April	28	...	...	...	...	...	22	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
May	15	...	...	...	2	...	14	...	3	...	...	...	3	...	6	...
June	27	...	1	...	1	...	22	1	6	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
July	24	...	...	...	1	...	15	...	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Aug.	15	...	...	...	...	...	11	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sept.	11	...	...	...	...	...	9	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Oct.	16	...	1	...	1	...	13	...	5	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Nov.	16	...	2	...	2	...	13	...	7	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
Dec.	11	...	...	...	2	...	8	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

	First Visits.			Revisits.			Total Visits.		
	Expect- ant Mothers.	Children.		Expect- ant Mothers.	Children.		Expect- ant Mothers.	Children.	
		Under 1 year.	Between 1 & 5 years.		Under 1 year.	Between 1 & 5 years.		Under 1 year.	Between 1 & 5 years.
Jan. ...	1	31	3	2	120	231	3	151	234
Feb. ...	5	22	2	5	97	195	6	119	197
March ...	7	21	2	3	154	460	10	175	462
April ...	6	21	...	8	160	329	14	171	329
May ...	5	34	6	1	150	197	6	144	203
June ...	3	28	...	4	135	308	...	163	308
July ...	5	26	...	8	91	154	13	117	154
August .	1	12	...	1	47	150	2	59	150
Sept. ...	7	33	...	6	99	158	13	132	158
Oct. ...	4	27	1	2	103	270	6	130	271
Nov. ...	6	24	1	7	90	164	13	114	165
Dec. ...	7	17	...	4	117	231	11	134	231

INFANT WELFARE.

THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER, 1925.

DISTRICT : WALSALL RURAL.

		Children on Visiting List at end of Month.		Deaths; Transfers; and Removals of Children on Visiting List during the Month.						Trans- ferred to School.
		Under One Year.	One Year & Under Five.	Under Ten Days.		Over Ten Days and Under One Year.		One Year and Under Five.		
				Deaths.	Removals	Deaths.	Removals	Deaths.	Removals	
Jan.	...	232	900	...	2	2	6	...	8	17
Feb.	...	229	898	2	...	1	1	3	2	9
Mar.	...	235	873	1	...	1	2	2	4	34
April	...	240	861	...	...	1	5	...	10	16
May	...	238	862	...	...	1	1	2	2	4
June	...	251	855	2	...	1	1	1	2	15
July	...	261	855	...	...	...	...	1	...	17
Aug.	...	234	845	1	...	...	4	2	7	37
Sept.	...	230	838	...	...	1	...	3	...	20
Oct.	...	221	852	...	...	...	2	3	3	14
Nov.	...	228	843	...	...	1	...	...	1	16
Dec.	...	202	848	...	...	...	...	3	...	23

WELFARE CENTRE.

		No. on Books.			Total No. of Attendanees.			No. of Cases of Insanitary Conditions reported to Medical. Officer of Health.	
		Expect- ant Mothers.	Children.		Expeet- ant Mothers.	Children.			Health Visitor.
			Under One Year.	Between One and Five Years.		Under One Year.	Between One and Five Years.		
Jan.	...	4	56	90	5	180	82	8	2
Feb.	...	5	47	65	1	87	86	8	4
Mar.	...	...	53	76	3	121	71	9	11
April	...	4	63	78	4	78	73	8	1
May	...	4	71	83	3	115	85	8	7
June	...	3	70	81	3	98	76	7	3
July	...	6	77	83	4	108	109	8	...
Aug.	...	7	77	83	...	71	60	2	...
Sept.	...	8	87	76	3	104	79	8	3
Oct.	...	5	96	73	3	99	97	7	2
Nov.	...	7	82	115	3	103	87	7	7
Dec.	...	11	75	120	3	111	113	8	2

